

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2017-2018 SPAN 333 A1: Reading Popular Culture
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Dr. Victoria Ruétalo
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Time: M, W, F 10:00-10:50
Place: HC 229
Office Hours: By appointment
Course Website: on E-class

Course Prerequisite: SPAN 300 or 306 or consent of department

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed, no such projects approved.

Community Service Learning component

Required Optional None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

The focus of this course is the study of popular culture and its traditions in the Hispanic world. The course will look at how to read questions of nation, class, race, gender, sexuality and their intersectionality in Hispanic popular cultural production and youth culture. Texts to be studied will be taken from films, folk art, festivals, sports, music, dance, comics, television, religion, and fashion. Popular culture from different periods of history will be studied in depth and students will have an opportunity to individually research other forms of popular culture that may be of interest.

At the end of the course successful students will be able to:

- Analyze and discuss different historical contexts to understand the important meanings of popular culture and their traditions.
- Engage the different definitions of popular culture to understand how these help to construct different meanings in different contexts.
- Demonstrate critical writing skills using theoretical concepts to comment on different examples of popular culture.
- Analyze, argue, and communicate ideas about popular culture in both written and oral formats.
- Accept constructive feedback and revise work accordingly.
- Work collaboratively in a shared environment to achieve a common goal.

Texts:

Selected Readings available on E-class through links.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

- 35%: 3 Essays [Essay #1 (2 pages) is worth 5% and due on September 29; Essay #2 (3-4 pages) is worth 10% and due on October 27; Essay #3 (5-6 pages) is worth 20% and due on November 29]
- 30%: 2 Term Tests [Test #1 on October 16 is worth 10%; Test #2 on December 8 is worth 20%]
- Presentations in partners: 20% (Must select date and topic provided on sign up sheet by week two. Presentations will appear in E-class and will be part of the course content to appear on tests).
- Class Participation: 15% (This means not only attendance but active and meaningful participation in class discussions).

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Guidelines for essays and exams will be provided on E-class. You will also find evaluation rubrics for essays and presentations on E-class.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course, attendance will be documented with a sign in sheet and will be factored as part of the participation component of the course. If the student misses more than half the classes s/he will automatically receive a 0% participation grade. Also note that simply attending the course will not guarantee a high participation grade, so it is essential for the student to actively participate individually or in group activities.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult in advance with the professor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the professor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, assignments will incur a 5% per class day penalty.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72

Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
Failure.	F	0.0	0-59